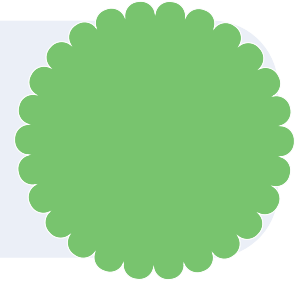


The Question Formulation Technique (QFT)

The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) is a structured method for teaching students to ask and improve their own questions. The QFT builds the skill of asking questions, an essential — yet often overlooked — lifelong learning skill that allows people to think critically, feel greater power and self-efficacy, and participate more effectively in decisions that affect them, their families, and their communities. The QFT was created by The Right Question Institute.

Question Focus

A teacher or facilitator shares a Question Focus (QFocus) which is a stimulus for jumpstarting questions from students. The QFocus may be a statement, phrase, image, video, or anything else that gets the questions flowing. It may not be a question, and it should be related to the content or intended learning outcomes.



Produce Questions



Students or learners ask questions about the QFocus following rules:

1. Ask as many questions as you can
2. Do not stop to answer, judge, or discuss your questions
3. Write down every question exactly as it is stated
4. Change any statements into questions

Improve Questions

- Students identify closed-ended and open-ended questions.
- Students change one closed-ended question into an open-ended question and one open-ended question into a closed-ended question.



Strategize



- Students prioritize their questions.
- Students create action plans and/or discuss next steps with their questions.
- Students share their priority questions.

Reflect

Students reflect on what they have learned and how they learned it. When participants name for themselves what they have learned it deepens their understanding of all the thinking they've done.

- What did you learn?
- How can you use what you learned?



Classroom Examples Using the QFT

...in Elementary Math

Question Focus:

$$24 = \text{☺} + \text{☺} + \text{☺}$$

Teacher: Deirdre Brotherson

Selected Student Questions:

1. Why is the 24 first?
2. What do the smiley faces mean?
3. Why are there 3 smiley faces?
4. How am I suppose to figure this out?
5. Is the answer 12?
6. Can I put any number for a smiley face?
7. Do the numbers have to be the same because the smiley faces are the same?
8. Can we replace each smiley face with an 8?
9. Do any other numbers work?

...in Middle School Social Studies

Question Focus:



Teacher: James Brewster

Selected Student Questions:

1. Why is the Eiffel Tower burning?
2. Is New York supporting Paris?
3. Why Paris and not any other city?
4. How many people died or got hurt?
5. Is this propaganda?
6. Is that related to the recent bombings?
7. Why did the Statue of Liberty say, "I'm coming?"
8. Why did ISIS attack?
9. Why doesn't France do anything?

...in High School Debate

Question Focus:

Questions we should be able to ask and answer of a reliable source

Teacher-Librarian: Connie Williams

Selected Student Questions:

1. Who wrote this? How much authority do they have to be writing about this?
2. For what purpose was this written?
3. How do they want me to feel?
4. How do they want me to act?
5. What are the sources of their numbers, charts, or other evidence?
6. Can we trace them back to their creator?
7. What is the purpose of the numbers/data being presented?

...and many more subjects and grade levels!

How Can I Learn More?

- For a selection of resources pertaining to RQI's sessions at AASL, visit: bit.ly/rqi-at-aasl-25
- To access our full resource library with hundreds of free resources, visit: rightquestion.org
- To learn more about our online course with the Harvard Graduate School of Education, visit: tinyurl.com/RQIHGSE

